REMARKS

Claims 4-8 are pending in this application, of which claim 4 has been amended. Claims 1-3 have been canceled. No new claims have been added.

Claims 1-5 and 7 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) as anticipated by European Patent Application EP 1 210 927 A2 to Jikiba et al. (hereafter "**Jikiba et al.**").

Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Jikiba et al. discloses a massage unit which moves upward and downward along a backrest of a chair. A pair of therapeutic arms are pivotably supported on a pair of pivot arms projecting forward when viewed from the backrest. Therapeutic fingers on the therapeutic arms have massage balls disposed on them. The pivot arms are driven to move the therapeutic arms in three dimensions, i.e., up and down, left and right, forward and back, so that a patient is massaged by the massage balls. An angle detecting means detects the angle of the therapeutic arms relative to the pivot arms. The magnitude and change in the output of the detecting means is used to determine the portion of the patient's body that is being contacted by the massage balls at any time.

Paragraph [0030] discloses:

> The massaging means 50 includes a massage shaft 52 pivotably supporting the sloped pivot arms 43, 43. A massage motor 51 rotates the massage shaft 52 through a reduction mechanism 53. Connection of the pivot arms 43, 43 to the connecting rods 45, 45 prevents rotation. When the massage shaft 52 rotates, the therapeutic arms 42, 42 move in a reciprocating motion toward and away from each other, thereby providing a massaging action.

Paragraph [0032] discloses:

> When the striking motor 61 rotates, the connecting rods 45, 45 connected eccentrically to the striking shaft 62 move the treatment fingers 40, 40 move vertically in a reciprocating manner to provide a striking action.

Paragraph [0061] discloses:

> The operations involved when the massage unit 30 is lowered while the treatment fingers 40, 40 are spread apart from each other will be described. Referring to Fig. 9, when the massage unit 30 is at the upper position of the backrest 13 as shown by the solid lines, i.e., when the massage balls 41 are not in contact with the patient, the therapeutic arms 42, 42 are tilted forward by the biasing from the spring 82. As a result, the output voltage from angle detecting means 70 is roughly 0, or minimum. The massage unit 30 is lowered and the upper massage balls 41 come into contact with the edge of the patient's shoulder. As the massage unit 30 is lowered after contact of the massage balls 41 with the shoulder, the therapeutic arms 42, 42 are raised to a roughly perpendicular state. This causes the magnetic core 72 to enter the coil 71. This produces a high output voltage from the angle detecting means 70.

In contrast, claim 4 has been amended to clarify that the upper rollers are movable forward or rearward relative to the massage unit, by the crank mechanism of the pushing-out mechanism, while the lower rollers are held in a given position on the massage unit. Therefore, the massage unit *per se* tilts about a fulcrum on the lower rollers by moving the upper rollers. This structure provides an advantage such that a greater force can be applied to the person to be massaged, stably and more easily from above, during kneading and tapping operations, because the lower part of the massage unit is held on the guide rail via the lower rollers.

Jikiba et al. fails to disclose a pushing-out mechanism for rendering the massage unit tiltable.

Thus, the 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) rejection is inapplicable to claims 4, 5 and 7, as amended, and should be withdrawn.

In view of the aforementioned amendments and accompanying remarks, claims 4-8, as amended, are in condition for allowance, which action, at an early date, is requested.

If, for any reason, it is felt that this application is not now in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney at the telephone number indicated below to arrange for an interview to expedite the disposition of this case.

In the event that this paper is not timely filed, Applicants respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time. Please charge any fees for such an extension of time and any other fees which may be due with respect to this paper, to Deposit Account No. 01-2340.

Respectfully submitted,

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